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## Chair

Mr. Pat Finnigan

# Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

**Monday, May 28, 2018**

● (1530)

[*English*]

**The Chair (Mr. Pat Finnigan (Miramichi—Grand Lake, Lib.)):** Welcome, everyone. We will now commence our study of the main estimates for 2018-19 with the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Thank you so much, Minister MacAulay, for appearing in front of our committee today. We're certainly delighted to have you with us.

On Monday, April 16, 2018, five votes under your ministry were referred to the committee, namely, vote 1 under the Canadian Dairy Commission, vote 1 under the Canadian Grain Commission, and votes 1, 5, and 10 under the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Also, we have the pleasure of having with us, from the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Mr. Chris Forbes. Welcome to our committee, Mr. Forbes. As well, we have Monsieur Pierre Corriveau, assistant deputy minister, corporate management branch.

We can start the discussion. Go ahead for up to 10 minutes, Mr. Minister.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Thank you very much, Chair.

[*Translation*]

Good afternoon, everyone.

[*English*]

I'm pleased to be back before the committee. Of course, I have my wingers here, which will be very helpful for information.

I want to thank the committee for its outstanding support for the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. The members of the committee are working together and across party lines to address some pressing priorities for Canadian farmers, and I want to thank the committee for its work on climate change issues in agriculture, advancements of technology and research in the agricultural industry to support Canadian exports, and the grain transportation backlog.

In particular, I want to thank the committee for its upcoming study on the mental health challenges faced by our farmers. This is a very serious issue, both on and off the farm. Mental health is a high priority for our government. My deputy minister has made it a high priority for the department, and our colleague, Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant, has been a champion for mental health on the farm, both in his riding and across the country.

My message to you today is that our government will continue to work with you to grow the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. I would like to touch on three areas: the main estimates, progress and priorities, and challenges and opportunities for the sector.

As you can see, the main estimates show a total budget of over $2.5 billion for 2018-19. That represents an increase of $260 million compared with last year. The two main reasons for this increase are the forecast increase of $150 million in business risk management spending based on market conditions, and $96 million for new programs to help dairy producers and processors stay on the cutting edge.

Across Canada we're rolling out our investments under the $350-million program for dairy processors and producers. These dollars are helping the industry boost production and efficiency through investments in equipment and systems for milking robots and processing technologies.

The main estimates also reflect great work done with the Canadian agricultural partnership. That includes grants and contributions of $105 million for the coming year for federal programs supporting research and innovation, market development, public trust, business risk, and diversity. The estimates also include over $200 million in cost-shared programs with the provinces and territories. It all adds up to a major investment in the agriculture and agri-food industry.

We've reached a couple of milestones since we last met. On May 23, Bill C-49 received royal assent. This is tremendous news for the grain industry. We proposed key amendments that responded to the needs of the industry. Demand for our great Canadian wheat and interest in grains continue to grow. The legislation will help to ensure our farmers can meet these demands with an efficient and reliable rail service. We want a world-class transportation system, not just for this year or next year but for many years down the road.

April 1 marked the launch of the new $3-billion, five-year Canadian agricultural partnership. The industry was very clear on the need for a smooth transition from the previous framework, and we were able to do that. We have completed almost all the bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories, covering shared funding of $2 billion over five years. The Canadian agricultural partnership also includes $1 billion over five years for federal activities and programs.

In February, as I mentioned earlier, we launched six federal programs to help the sector reach new heights. We also continue to support the great work of our agricultural scientists across the country. Agricultural and agri-food scientists continue to make groundbreaking discoveries that help our farmers increase production, cut costs, and boost the bottom line.

Over the next five years, the Canadian agricultural partnership will help Canadian farmers and processors grow their markets, innovate, and protect our environment. It will also help farmers manage their business risk while strengthening public trust in their products. The partnership will help bring more young farmers, women, and indigenous people into leadership roles in the sector.

● (1535)

Investments over the past three budgets are building on a strong agricultural agenda.

Agri-food has been selected as one of the five groups to receive funding under the $950-million supercluster initiative, budgeted in 2017. Protein Industries Canada will make our country a global leader in sustainable plant protein. It will help to open new markets for our pulse growers.

Budget 2018 builds on this work with the single largest investment in fundamental research in Canadian history. That's an investment of nearly $4 billion in Canada's research system to support the next generation of researchers, while upgrading the tools they need to do the job.

We're also investing $75 million to grow our trade in China and across key Asian markets for Canadian farmers. Trade continues to be a strong focus for our government.

We're aiming to increase our agricultural exports to $75 billion by 2025. On March 8, Canada signed the CPTPP. For the agricultural sector, that means tariffs will be eliminated on Canadian meat, grains, and horticultural and processed foods. The access could mean $1 billion per year of new sales for beef and pork producers.

When you combine these benefits with the benefits under our trade agreement with the EU and other trade agreements, Canadian farmers will have a competitive edge in about two-thirds of the global economy. That's good news because it helps us diversify our trade.

Asia is a new frontier for our farmers and food processors. In March, I led a trade mission to Japan and Korea, and earlier this month I was in China, which has a growing middle-class population that's looking for the food that our farmers and ranchers can produce. The mission was a great opportunity to showcase Canada's high-quality food and seafood, and to strengthen our ties.

We're also working with our partners in North America to update, modernize, and improve NAFTA. Right across North America, farmers are united in their support of NAFTA. On Thursday, I will be in Dallas to address the World Meat Congress, and I will deliver Canada's message for a strong, modern, and progressive NAFTA.

The bottom line is that Canada's farmers are ready to feed the world, and the Government of Canada stands ready to support them in these efforts. Of course, challenges remain and always will. We're working to resolve the situation in India affecting our pulse exports.

There will always be challenges in agriculture, whether it's tough competition on the global stage, protectionism, or changing consumer demands.

When I look ahead at the prospects for our great industry, I see a great promise. Canada's agriculture and agri-food industry continues to grow. Last year, the industry generated $111 billion of our GDP, according to our recent financial outlook. The average farm net worth will hit a new record in 2018, and Canada's net farm income will be the second highest on record. Last year, our agriculture food and seafood exports hit an all-time record of over $64 billion, moving us closer to that $75 billion target.

Demand for our food continues to grow, and Canada has a competitive edge to meet that demand. We are blessed with an abundance of farmland and water, the best farmers and ranchers in the world, and a government that's reinvesting in agriculture.

The time is right for the Canadian agriculture and food industry to increase its presence on the global stage. Through smart investment and continued collaboration, I'm confident that we can meet the challenges that lie ahead.

I want to thank you again for your attention.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, everyone.

● (1540)

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you so much, Mr. Minister, for updating us on the agricultural industry, both here and abroad.

Now we'll start our round of questions with Mr. Berthold for six minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold (Mégantic—L'Érable, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Minister, thank you for joining us today. We miss you. We would like to see you more often in committee. You are welcome to come any time you want to meet with us. At any rate, I am pleased to receive you here in committee, because your minister colleagues won't be rising to answer the questions, the way they do in the House. I hope you will seize every opportunity to answer our questions today.

In a request to information that I submitted to the government, I asked whether Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada had carried out studies on the impact of the new food guide on the various sectors of the agriculture industry. To my great surprise, I was told that the department had conducted no such studies.

Why did you transfer the responsibility of protecting farmers to the Minister of Health?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Did I hear you correctly? You asked me why I'm abdicating my responsibilities to the agricultural—

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Yes, about the food guide.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Without question, the food guide has been established. It's under the Minister of Health, as you're fully aware.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** But why?

[*Translation*]

I know how the food guide works. Instead, I want to know why your department has not done any studies on the impact the new food guide may have on Canadian industries and producers.

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** My deputy can certainly answer anything about what the department would do, but of course the food guide itself goes out for consultation. Of course, consultations will come back, and we want to—

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** So your department has not done a study.

Mr. Minister, do you believe that yogurt, cheese and fruit juice are harmful to our health?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** This is under discussion. What will or will not be in the food guide has not been fully decided.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** It's not about the food guide. It's about the front-of-package labelling.

[*Translation*]

It's about labelling. Yogurt, fruit juice and cheese will be labelled as products containing too much fat and too much salt. Do you believe that those products are dangerous to the health of Canadians?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** As you know with the consultations, we have a lot of input from the sector. It will be evaluated, and the food guide will be put together. I'm sure you want people to understand what is in the product, not to criticize the product. You're not against labelling on food products, I don't believe.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** So you agree that those products should be labelled as products that Canadians should be wary of. Is that it?

[*English*]

You are agreed that those products are not dangerous, but people must be warned against them.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** No. I would agree it's only right that Canadians are informed of what's in the product. I am not opposed to that.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** So we understand that you agree with the position of the Department of Health.

Mr. Minister, on a number of occasions, you said that you were defending the supply management system.

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** With the Department of Health's decision on what?

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** You've often said you agree to defend supply management.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Of course, we—

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** The question is not that.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** No, but you've made a statement. Consultation processes are taking place. We have the information. The information will be evaluated. There will be discussions among ministers, and then the decision will be made as to what takes place. It's not that I agree or disagree. I'm a part of the government but I'm not all of the government. What takes place with labelling will be decided by cabinet.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Will you defend the cheese producers, the yogourt producers, and the juice producers in cabinet?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I always defend farmers anywhere I go. I promote agriculture and the agri-food sector, and I will continue to do so.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** We'll see the results.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Minister, on a number of occasions, you said that you were defending the supply management system. Are you formally promising today that Canada will not make any new concessions to the U.S. in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) negotiations?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I appreciate your question on supply management, and I have responded to the supply management question many times in the House and in public. We're the party that fought to implement it, and we're the government that will defend it.

As you know, there are negotiations on NAFTA to improve the total package. I don't believe it would be fair for me to publicly indicate what I would do. I have fully committed to supporting supply management from the day I became minister and long before, because I milk cows myself and I know the importance of the supply management system.

● (1545)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Do you promise that Canada will not make any new concessions in the negotiations with the U.S.? It is all well and good to defend the supply management system, but if Canada made a new concession when it has already made one under the Trans-Pacific Partnership, it could hurt producers a great deal.

Do you promise that Canada will not be making any new concessions in the NAFTA negotiations?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I'll always defend farmers, but as you know discussions are taking place in Washington. We have very capable people at the table, and they will defend our interests. As we have said many times, the only agreement we will sign is an agreement that's good for Canadians and good for Canadian agriculture.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Thank you, Mr. Berthold.

Now we'll go to Mr. Longfield for six minutes.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield (Guelph, Lib.):** Thanks. Mr. Chair.

Mr. Minister, it's great to see you here. I saw you in Toronto last Friday. You were coming back from an announcement in Winnipeg on Bill C-49 being successfully put through the House, on both sides. It's a terrific piece of legislation that's going to help our farmers. There was great reception in the room. Could you comment on what you saw in terms of the reception in Winnipeg? You could save that one.

In the context of a tour our committee did, where we went across western Canada in the last few weeks, we went to GrainsConnect, in Maymont, and we saw a new superterminal that is processing shipments. The loop system they're using is out of this world. They're filling a hundred cars in one shift. Incredible technology is being used in Saskatchewan.

During our tour of the Vancouver harbour, we looked at the expansion of the G3 Terminal there. We looked at Richardson's completed expansion, and we looked at the Viterra expansion from a few years back. CN is now purchasing 1,000 new hopper cars. They're current to customer demand for the last month or so. We have capacity in the network. We have a transportation bill that's gone through, Bill C-49. What are they thinking in Winnipeg? What's the current climate in the agriculture sector, as you're seeing it, around our transportation and getting grain to market?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I have to say that everybody, all the grain sectors represented there, seemed to be pleased. I had Ralph Eichler, the Progressive Conservative minister, and me. The railways were not there, but I understand they're quite pleased too. You kind of wonder what's going on when everybody's pleased.

You mentioned about CN ordering new cars. That's just one part of what's taking place, the new hopper cars that will carry 10% or more product more efficiently. That's so vitally important.

Being a farmer, having grown potatoes on Prince Edward Island, having been involved in demurrage, and what takes place if the car comes in and you have some kind of a problem and can't fill the car or cars, I know that what you do is pay. Now it's reciprocal penalties. I never expected I would be Minister of Agriculture and somewhat responsible for that part of the legislation. I found it truly unbelievable. I think it's great for the grain farmers right across the country and for anybody else who is shipping. That was one thing. When it was mentioned to me first, of course I pushed, like everybody does, and you push as hard as you can for agriculture, no matter where you are. I might have indicated that it was a big request, and I might have also indicated that it was probably not possible, but here it is and I think people are so pleased.

To get soybean under the maximum revenue entitlement, that's only a matter of fairness, in my opinion. It's a very important sector. The soybean is grown right across this country. What it does is give them more protection. It's obvious that the change that has taken place with the legislation in general gives the railways the opportunity to invest in more infrastructure to move agricultural products, and many other products, too.

There's an awful lot more to Bill C-49, but I know, Lloyd, you want to ask me something else.

● (1550)

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** I do. I want to just extend—

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I'll switch, you know. All this is so great.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** You're reading my mind. You're seeing I'm nodding faster.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I thought you were saying, "Hurry up, hurry up!"

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** We all want to ask you lots of questions.

It's not just grain, as you were leading into. We also went to a Case New Holland plant in Saskatoon, making huge equipment there. We have to move equipment. In my riding of Guelph, they're shipping automotive parts and that needs cars and locomotives as well, so we need a comprehensive transportation network in which we aren't taking cars out of eastern Canada to work in western Canada. We need a comprehensive network that connects the ports, the trucks, and the railways. The reason that it's such a big bill is that it is a comprehensive network that we're working on.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I agree completely. Of course we don't want to take cars from somewhere else. What we want to do is to make sure there are enough cars to move the products. Without any question, the 1,000 hopper cars for CN alone is a big issue, but it's much more than that. I've indicated it won't all be solved the day after we sign Bill C-49, and farmers are fully aware of that. There could be double-tracking in areas, the bottleneck in Vancouver, all of this stuff, though I agree the bottleneck in Vancouver was not the problem this year. It is a problem sometimes, though, and that has to be addressed too. Down the road, it gives us, the government and the railways, an opportunity to put a proper system in place.

Lloyd, you're fully aware, and everybody at this table is fully aware, that if we do not put a proper system in place and do not deliver the product on time, somebody else will—

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** That's right.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —and we will lose the market. That's why this is so vital.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Beyond that, the boards of directors of CN and CP need to know there is consistency in the legislation so that they can make those investments on track and equipment.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** By the way, CN moved so quickly, I think they understand the change in the legislation. That's why I was so supportive of the legislation. I pushed as hard as I could, and I might have had a little more success than I thought, but it's great. It's good for agriculture and it's good for the economy. All it will mean is more money for farmers. That's simply what it will mean.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** We like that.

Thanks a lot, Mr. MacAulay.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Longfield. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Just before I move on, I forgot to welcome Mr. Paul Lefebvre. He's sitting in for Francis today.

Welcome to our committee, Paul.

Mr. Alistair MacGregor.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor (Cowichan—Malahat—Langford, NDP):** Thank you.

Thank you, Minister, for appearing before the committee today.

I want to start my questions with the temporary foreign worker program, specifically the seasonal agricultural worker stream. I know it's under another department, but this has to do with agricultural workers and the farms they work on. I've been meeting with a lot of stakeholders who said their applications used to be processed in about six weeks. It has gone up to 20 weeks. We're in a situation now where you have farmers who are in dire need of a labour pool, you have workers who want to work, and they are dealing with a perishable product.

I would like to know, Minister, what are you, and what is your department, doing in working with other ministers to get a resolution to this problem so both labourers and the people who employ them can fill these jobs. I recognize we need to safeguard the rights of workers, but I would like to know what you specifically are doing to try to make this an easier time for both interested parties, please.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I agree.

Thank you, Alistair. I very much appreciate your question.

I understand it can cause difficulty, and it's the responsibility of the government to make it better. We're working on it. Is it perfect? No, it's not. We have more work to do, and we will.

I just had a round table with Minister Hajdu a couple of weeks ago put together by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. That was a place, plus other ways, to give the sectors an opportunity to say to the minister responsible just what the problem was. Everybody cares about workers' rights. That's for sure. Nobody would say they don't, but we also have to make sure, as you indicated, Alistair, that we have a proper labour pool. I can assure you that is certainly my interest. That's what I've worked on–

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Can you give a commitment that in 2018 when we have crops that are ready to harvest at the end of summer, this problem will not arise?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** What I can give you, Alistair, is to make sure I will continue to work with the ministers responsible to make sure we resolve this issue as soon as possible. I indicated that there are a number of paths. The temporary foreign worker and the path to citizenship both are very important because we need more people.

Look, I know there are some meat plants in western Canada that run at half capacity because we don't have enough. We're working on it, we know the problem, and we're working hard to resolve it. We have done some, but not enough.

● (1555)

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Okay.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I appreciate your question.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Now I would like to talk about supply management, surprise, surprise. I have the Barton report in front of me, which stated on page 12, under dairy, that they want your government to progressively reduce obstacles such as rigid provincial quotas.

We have former Liberal members of Parliament, John Manley and Martha Hall Findlay, who both, after coming out of politics, advocated for the end of supply management. We've had *The Globe and Mail* say if CETA created a breach, CPTPP threatens to blow our supply management wide open.

It just feels like, despite all of your commitments to supply management, the sector very much is suffering death by a thousand cuts. When I talk to supply-managed sectors, they are starting to get very worried.

I want to follow up on Mr. Berthold's question. Can you give this committee a guarantee, after sectioning off certain percentages of supply management under the previous two trade deals, that NAFTA will not do this? Can you give a guarantee to our supply-managed sectors here and now?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Alistair, I appreciate your question. I'm a strong supporter of supply management. I should have taken a pen. There are a lot of things to sign here today.

I will work very hard to make sure that the supply management... as I have always and will continue, whatever sector. The supply management system is a vitally important sector for agriculture.

I'm fully aware of what it does. I was involved in it. It produces a top-quality product at a reasonable price. Are there people who are opposed to it in the media, in politics, on parties? Yes.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Critics have come from your own party, Minister.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** They could come from anywhere. I could start naming people everywhere if I want—

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** I'm not sure if there are any New Democrats.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —but I don't want to get into that. I want to make sure we do it right, as well as we can. I don't want to block anybody here at all, and I'm sure you don't either. I understand the importance of this system, and that what we have to do is to make sure we strongly support the supply management system. That's what we have done.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you, and I'd like to get one more question in, to do with the CFIA.

On our agriculture committee trip, we were hearing from a lot of people that the CFIA is still trying to recover from cuts, and that there are people in the CFIA who may be following the letter of the law but don't really understand the spirit of the law. They're worried that the CFIA doesn't have the necessary level of experience to help with SPS measures overseas and understand regulatory conditions in other countries. If we're to reach an export goal of $75 billion, what steps, Minister, are you taking in working with the Department of Health to ensure that the CFIA has that competence and that level of experience to enable us to meet our export goals, especially in terms of staffing in overseas embassies?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** As you know, in the budget we allocated $29 million toward the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and $47 million to help the CFIA deal with food safety issues before they reach the domestic consumer, which is vitally important.

I travel worldwide. CFIA is vitally important. I will assure you that I will make sure to the best of my ability that it's well funded. We have put money into the CFIA, and we will need to put more money into the CFIA, because when exporters export products around the world, if those products have the maple leaf and the CFIA approval, people, particularly in the Asian world, feel that the food is safe. Safe food is a vitally important issue, and that's what the CFIA does for us.

Quite honestly, I've been on both sides of the CFIA. I had inspectors come in, and sometimes I'd be a little annoyed. They might have had a little problem with my potatoes. I got into a lawsuit, though, and I found out how important it is to have a science-based regulatory system many years ago. I had this experience personally, so I can tell you that I am a full supporter.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Minister and Mr. MacGregor.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Nassif, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.):** Mr. Minister, thank you for joining us and answering our questions.

Trade is very important to Canadian farmers and farms. Our government has set a target of $75 billion per year by 2025 for agricultural exports.

Could you tell us what we should be doing to achieve that goal and what your intentions are when you lead agricultural trade delegations abroad?

● (1600)

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** What's important is that the food you export is considered safe. When I have the privilege of visiting China and Japan and such areas, it's so important to have that element, but it's also important to go there, and it's important that they understand what we have to offer. Basically, you have to sit down face to face with them, at least to get the door open, and that is what I'm trying to do.

It has helped. We have a number of deals. An example is that I was in Japan for the hog industry. Costco has something like 127 stores in Japan, and they only sell Canadian pork. That's a big deal. Then, of course, to get the chilled beef into China is vitally important. I know we have to increase our beef herds. We will do that too. Then you come down to canola, and of course, that's a big deal with China and other countries around the world that import our canola.

These things are so important, but you have to be there, you have to tell them what you have and build a rapport. Minister Han is the minister of agriculture in China. He and I have a rapport. That helps, because there's an element of trust developed, and that's important.

With that, though, you also have to have the product, and you have to have a continual supply of the product. These things are told to you while you're there, and we will do our best working with the sectors in this country to make sure we have more supply, because if we're going to export 75 billion dollars' worth of product, we have to have 75 billion dollars' worth, and we will.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Eva Nassif:** Thank you.

Could you tell us what Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is doing to increase women's participation in those sectors?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much, Eva, for that question.

I have to say that politics can be a bit tough at times, but my wife Frances and I had the privilege of attending the Advancing Women in Agriculture Conference in Calgary. What an experience that was. We sat on the stage for about 45 minutes and took questions back and forth. What they saw was the role that she plays in my political life and in my agricultural life too, because all that we have done in life was done together. She has been as big a player as I have in anything that we've done, including growing seed potatoes or the dairy industry.

We had about 400 women who were very interested in becoming involved in the agricultural sector in that room. They asked all kinds of questions, and we had conversations afterwards. That kind of thing is so important. To help achieve this, we launched the Canadian agricultural partnership. There's also a part called agri-diversity, which gives an opportunity for funding to women, aboriginal groups, and these types of people, to be sure that they're fully involved. In my sector, my wife could drive a 16-wheeler or a combine. She could do the books, and she could sit down and have a fancy meal too.

That's simply how it is. We're all the same, and that's what we have to make sure society understands. Whether a woman or a man, either one can do either one. That's how it was in my life. That's what I want to be sure we promote, and that's what the Government of Canada is promoting, to make sure that more women and other groups are involved in the agricultural sector.

[*Translation*]

**Mrs. Eva Nassif:** On April 1, the Canadian agricultural partnership came into effect.

Can you tell us about the implementation of the five-year framework, the programs that have been implemented, and [*technical difficulties*] based on what you have heard so far?

Also, could you relate that to superclusters?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Of course, the supercluster is fabulous, as we all know, for the protein sector—I mentioned lentils, which of course presents a difficulty at the moment—and moving these products. It gives us a chance to produce more protein.

The Canadian agricultural partnership is a program that was put together by federal, provincial, and territorial governments, with $2 billion, 60% paid by the federal government and 40% by the provincial governments. There is also $1 billion that addresses the federal government's initiative, which is trade, research, and these issues that are so vitally important.

On the federal, provincial, and territorial side, there's agri-stability to help if you have difficulty. For example, for the fires out in western Canada, the government was able to work with the provincial government. There's a program in place in order to make sure these problems are addressed right away.

The TB issue in Alberta is another example. Being a farmer, I know these are the kinds of things that can be devastating to the agricultural sector. I'd like to say one thing on fires, too. It's very important to realize that the federal and provincial governments help, but in the end, farmers pay, because no matter what, when you have these kinds of things happening, there's never everything put in. There is always stuff that is missed, and again, the farmer pays more. I'm so fully aware of that, but we do our best to make sure that the programs address the problems as well as we can. It's the same thing with floods, innovation.... It covers a whole gamut of issues that are so vitally important to the agricultural sector.

● (1605)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister MacAulay.

[*Translation*]

Thank you, Mrs. Nassif.

Mr. Breton, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Mr. Pierre Breton (Shefford, Lib.):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Minister, if you don't mind, I will take a few seconds to thank and congratulate the entire team that accompanied us on our trip a few weeks ago as part of our current study on exports. In particular, we want to increase the value of exported products from $65 billion to $75 billion.

The clerk, the analysts and the team of interpreters who accompanied and supported us throughout our trip demonstrated an excellent sense of organization and great professionalism. It wasn't a sightseeing trip, far from it. On the contrary, we worked hard with our colleagues on the committee. The experience was extremely rewarding. We met with representatives from some great companies, and that's going to feed very well into our study.

I am not speaking on anyone's behalf, but I am sure that the colleagues who are here and were on this trip found your work outstanding. Thank you again. I would have liked to thank the interpreters who accompanied us, but I see that they are not here today.

**Mrs. Eva Nassif:** They will still get the message.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** When you do that, you talk to normal Canadians, to the average Canadian. That's so important.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Excellent.

Mr. Minister, the government has put in place a $350 million program, the dairy farm investment program. The program is also open to our dairy processors. In my riding, the program has been well received. A number of farms have so far had the opportunity to receive those types of subsidies to modernize their farms and increase their production capacity and efficiency.

Could you tell us about the status of the various investments?

What messages are you getting from companies in the industry? What are the positive impacts on the industry?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much, Pierre. As you know, it's $350 million to invest: $250 million for the producer and $100 million for the processor. Of course, these were put in place to make sure that the farmers and the processors were on the cutting edge. For example, I've been at a number of farms where they have robots, automatic cleaners. In fact, some operations could run if mankind left for a week or so. It's amazing what takes place, but they're large and they have to have all the innovation possible, and they do.

What this does, of course, is make the supply management sector even stronger. But you're asking me, too, what has been spent at the moment. Over $66 million has already been approved for dairy farms across Canada, of which $26 million is in Quebec, and $24 million of the money has been approved for the processing industry right across the country. This is vitally important both ways because the consumption of dairy products is increasing continually and we have to make sure we provide the products.

The consumer asks for a different product, and that's what you have to provide whether it's in the beef industry or the dairy industry, or whatever it happens to be. You have to be able to provide the product. You have to be able to provide the product in the way the consumer wants it. This program, as I think you are all aware, was put together with the agricultural sector. It came from the bottom up. It came from the farmers up through. Was $350 million enough?

What is enough? It is a major asset to the industry and hopefully it will continue as we have spent a good bit of money and will continue to do so. What it will do is make sure that the dairy farmers and the dairy processors remain on the cutting edge. That is vitally important no matter where you are.

I think farmers have been innovators from day one anyway, because quite simply being farmers, for example, there are ways of moving stuff. They are always inventing ways of making the job a little more convenient. Perhaps grain is up instead of down. There are just so many things you can do to cut the costs, and, of course, with these dollars we are able to make sure it's even cut more, and that puts more money into the pockets of farmers, which is exactly what I want to do.

● (1610)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

On another note, in recent months the committee has conducted a major study on climate change and all aspects of agriculture. You have probably received the report and recommendations.

How do you anticipate the department will be able to support everything related to climate change issues? That type of issue is a reality in our country and around the world.

Could you comment on the investment opportunities in that area?

[*English*]

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much, Pierre. Yes, indeed, I fully believe that we have to take care of the environment and make sure we increase our industries in this country. That is exactly what we have done, and that is what we will continue to do.

Our agricultural clean technology program is a three-year program of $25 million that will help farmers decrease greenhouse gas emissions through development and adaptation of clean technology. Also, our government has committed to $70 million over six years to support emerging priorities such as climate change and soil and water conservation. Without question, on soil and water conservation, anybody who is around agriculture understands what happens if you don't take care of those issues: you lose. Anything that washes away is dollars away from the farmer, and what we want to make sure is that we have programs in place. In fact, there are laws in place, too, to protect that if it runs into waterways.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We have to make sure that we have these programs in place and that we continue to invest in this area because—

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —we have to grow our GDP and reduce our emissions and that's exactly what we indicated we'd do and that's what we are doing.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Minister and *merci*, Mr. Breton.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Now we have Mr. Barlow.

**Mr. John Barlow (Foothills, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and my thanks to the minister for being here.

Before I ask my first question, I wanted to correct the record a little bit on some of the comments you've made so far. You talked about the investments you've had in CFIA, especially in the food safety program. Maybe you're not aware, but you're actually reducing the funding to the food safety program by close to $100 million and you're reducing the staff by close to 700 employees in the food safety program at CFIA. That's one.

You talked about front-of-pack labelling and you wanted to make sure the labels weren't criticizing the ingredients in those products. That's exactly what the front-of-pack labelling does. You're criticizing Canadian wholesome products like milk, meat, and yogourt. Those are some of the concerns we have with those projects.

My first question is about Bill C-49, and I appreciate your taking a lot of credit for the work that was done on Bill C-49, but you also talked about being a farmer in P.E.I. and the importance of that bill. You also know that Atlantic Canada is exempt from some of the elements of that bill, including long-haul interswitching, which ensures that farmers in Atlantic Canada are still captive to one shipper. Also, farmers are asking for own-motion powers for the Canadian Transportation Agency, which is not in there.

I quote Jeff Nielsen, president of Grain Growers, who said, "Everything would have been nice. All the amendments the Senate came back with would have made the bill that much better."

Minister, why weren't you fighting for those very critical amendments that our farmers wanted? Why weren't you fighting for some additional accountability in Bill C-49 to ensure that in the event of another grain backlog there would be elements in place for the Canadian Transportation Agency to take action against the rail lines without having to go through the minister?

● (1615)

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** John, I appreciate most of what you had to say. Of course, you were well aware that we did increase funding to CFIA. I indicated quite clearly—

**Mr. John Barlow:** That's not what the documents from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada say.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I have the floor at the moment, John. The point is, you are fully aware of what we have done and how important it is for CFIA to—

**Mr. John Barlow:** I can show you the document right here if you're not familiar....

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** It's also important, John, when you're putting a bill together, that you put the proper transportation system in place for the country. I think you're fully aware of what took place with Bill C-49 and all the investments that have been made.

You know the difficulties that we had over the years, when your government was in power and grain was not moving in the west. When we got elected—

**Mr. John Barlow:** We reacted in a much quicker fashion.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We indicated that we were going to —

**Mr. John Barlow:** We put Bill C-30 through immediately and own-motion powers.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I was very polite when you were speaking, even though I mightn't have agreed with all you had to say.

What I had to do as Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food was to make sure the issues for the nation were addressed. When you look at what took place and all the amendments and all the issues that were involved in Bill C-49 and all we did to make sure that everything was addressed and the grain moved, I'm sure you fully agree that reciprocal penalties are vitally important. I never dreamed the likes of that would happen when I wasn't Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. It's so important to the farmer, not that it's unfair to the railways, but it's just fair both ways.

Making sure that soybean was under the maximum revenue entitlement, I'm sure you agree with that, even though you might have voted against it and that was vitally important.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Minister, you sort of answered my question.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Also, we had to make sure the long-haul interswitching was put in place—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Minister, you're just trying to run out the time.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —in order to make sure that we had a proper—

**Mr. John Barlow:** You're not answering the questions I gave you.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —transportation system, John.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I would like to move on to the next question, please.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** That's what you have to have in order to make sure that you move the product.

**Mr. John Barlow:** If you can't answer the question, I'm going to move on to the next question, if that's okay.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** You know what took place before Bill C-49 came into play.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I know exactly that.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** You know the problems there were.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Minister—

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We put the bill in place and now we have a situation in which—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Minister, could you answer my question?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —over the years we will be able to move the product and we will be able to make sure that grain—

**Mr. John Barlow:** How much is the carbon tax going to cost Canadian farmers? Could you answer that question, please?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —meets the target for the export market, for if you do not have the grain—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Minister, could you answer how much the carbon tax is going to cost Canadian farmers? Have you done that analysis?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I can tell you one thing, my good friend John, and that is that farmers have been great stewards of the land. They have been taking care of our environment for many years and will continue to do so. Carbon pricing is an important part. You know very well—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Can you tell me how much it's going to cost the Canadian farmer? Give me a dollar figure. Have you done that analysis?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** John, is it my time to talk?

**Mr. John Barlow:** No, it's my time.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We canvassed to make sure that we would take care of the environment and increase our productivity—

**Mr. John Barlow:** So can you say, "I don't know"?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —and that is exactly what we have done.

As you're fully aware, a large portion of the country is under a tax on carbon and the farmers know very well if you do not take care of your land and water, you cannot produce an agricultural product. That is why they bought into our program of making sure—

**Mr. John Barlow:** So you're saying you haven't done the analysis on what it's going to cost Canadian farmers to pay for the carbon tax.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** You know very well that the provincial government has the opportunity to reimburse—

**Mr. John Barlow:** No, this is a federal carbon tax. You take responsibility for it. Have you done the analysis, yes or no?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We made sure that we're going to take care of the environment and increase our GDP and that is—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Farmers are looking for answers.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** You know it, John.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Farmers are looking for definitive answers, Mr. Minister, and you're not giving it to them. That's what we're facing.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** The farmers want—

**Mr. John Barlow:** We want somebody fighting for us here.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Farmers got what they voted for: a good government that's making sure that we have—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Yes, we voted but we didn't get what we voted for.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —a transportation system in place that works to make sure we take care of our environment and increase our GDP at the same time. That's exactly what we are doing.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Can you tell Canadian farmers how much the carbon tax is going to cost them?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** I met a lot of Canadian farmers just three or four days ago. They were elated at what we were doing, even though you voted against the bill—

● (1620)

**Mr. John Barlow:** You're talking to Canadian farmers.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —but you can answer for that in the next election. We feel that Bill C-49 was vital to the agricultural sector.

**Mr. John Barlow:** We're talking about the carbon tax.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** We also feel that—

**Mr. John Barlow:** Can you tell me what the carbon tax is going to cost the Canadian farmer?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —taking care of our water and soil is also vitally important, and we've done that.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** John, it's been a privilege.

**The Chair:** This is a very interesting conversation. Unfortunately, we have to move on.

Mr. Peschisolido, you have up to six minutes.

**Mr. Joe Peschisolido (Steveston—Richmond East, Lib.):** Mr. Chair, thank you.

Minister, it's always great to have you here and to hear you answer in a very thorough, thoughtful manner.

Minister, you recall that a couple of years back you visited the Hogler farm in Steveston—Richmond East, and you mentioned that you recently visited Korea, Japan, and China. A lot of those folks are interested in expanding into those markets.

Can you tell them what you heard on these trips and also give them advice and tips on how they can expand into these emerging markets?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Joe, thank you very much.

We had some farmers and exporters from Canada exporting the very products that you and I looked at on that farm: cucumbers, beets, and these types of things. There is a market for that too. Without question the exporters in this country fully understand that the market is there for these products.

We can produce those products as well as we can produce canola, beef, and pork, and all these other things. It was heartwarming to see. We had a function at the embassy with a lot of importers from China. The interest that the importers had in the green products that are smaller, like cucumbers and beets and that type of thing, and the demand for that... When you look at the population of China and the expansion of the middle class—it's the population of this country every year with money to buy the products that you and I had today for dinner—they want the product.

In a nutshell, these people made sure that the importers in China understood we can produce these high-quality products, and they were done up in a really grand fashion. I'm so proud to see that. Without a doubt they will be selling a lot of these products in China but again it's important to be there.

They were there and they had their products and they were showing their products and they're indicating how they're produced. They are concerned about the environment in China too. They want us to take care of our environment, and we are. They also want the quality products. They want to make sure they have a safe product. Without a doubt the producers or the exporters and the importers we had there were impressed with what they saw. I'm glad you brought that up. It was interesting, to say the very least.

**Mr. Joe Peschisolido:** Minister, earlier on Monsieur Breton talked about the dairy farm investment program. Another individual you met a year ago or so, is from the Savage farm. They have a dairy farm in east Richmond and they were able to obtain funding under the dairy farm investment program to innovate, to go into organic products.

Can you talk a little about how this program has been used, particularly in B.C.?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Of course, right across the country —and you mentioned organic—as you know, we've supplied the funding for the organic standards, and that's so important, too. It's important to realize, when you talk about organic milk, that the truth is that market is expanding, too, so these people are on the cutting edge in a lot of different ways. But we import as much organic product as we export, so it's important that we increase our production in that area. I believe the programs we've put together... and you're talking about the $250-million and the $100-million programs that let farmers innovate. With this, of course, it will enable the farmers to put robots in to milk the cows. They'll be able to put in the automatic cleaners. It will just make them more efficient and be able to handle the product more.

It's interesting, when you watch these programs...and I've been in a number of barns. Of course, it's automatic. The cow goes in when it wishes to be milked, not when you decide you're going to milk it. All of these things create more efficiency, more production, and more dollars for farmers. That's what the basis of the program is all about, and that's what we want to make sure continues.

What you're talking about in B.C. is just great. Of course, they can produce a lot of these green products, too—the smaller products that you mentioned first.

On the dairy side, they would become more efficient. On the cucumber and other programs that we put in place, we're always working to make sure that people in other parts of the world understand what we have and the quality that we have and how safe it is. Again, as John said, the investment in CFIA is so vitally important to make sure that the product is safe, and that's what you have to do if you're sitting in China. Safe food, anywhere, is vitally important.

● (1625)

**Mr. Joe Peschisolido:** Minister, as you know, the committee has been studying climate change and how we can improve and advance agriculture, both locally and in exporting.

Can you talk to the committee a bit about what you and the ministry have done in investments to deal with climate change?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** As you're fully aware, and what you canvassed on, was to make sure that you dealt with the environment and the economy hand in hand. Of course, that's why we put a number of different programs in place, which we canvassed on, such as a price on carbon. People understand that we have only one place to live. You also understand that before we came to power there had been massive cuts, millions and millions of dollars, in science research in the agricultural sector.

As you know, we put $100 million back into science and research, which is vitally important. Without this kind of research you would never be able to, let's say, produce the canola seed, which was produced by Agriculture and Agri-Food scientists. But there are so many other ways to improve our environment and increase our productivity and make sure there is no loss to the agricultural sector. Land management alone is one area where a lot of money can be lost. Precision agriculture is the system that makes sure that all these things are so interesting, but so valuable, and help the bottom line.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Peschisolido, and Mr. Minister.

Now we have Mr. Dreeshen for five minutes.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen (Red Deer—Mountain View, CPC):** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the minister.

What I'm going to refer to is page 29 of CFIA's departmental plan for 2018-19. In that, there is a relationship that speaks to the actual expenditures of 2014-15, which is the last year of the Conservatives, and then it shows and goes through the planned expenditures and the planned full-time equivalents for the next three years and planned spending for the Liberals. In that, when we deal with the expenditure side, one out of 20 of the categories showed an increase. In 19 out of 20 there were less funds.

On the full-time equivalents, three times out of 20, there were increased full-time equivalents, and 17 times out of 20 there were fewer full-time equivalents. On April 16, 2018, when we discussed trade initiatives, I indicated that when you look at the budgets, it looks like in the next couple of years there will be a reduction to CFIA. We used to have around 3,200 full-time equivalents. In the projections, it's down to 2,600 to 2,800. There's always talk about having the manpower, having the money, but we can see that it's coming out of CFIA. The answer from Mr. Fred Gorrell was:

> That's a good question. For the agency, definitely, how we prioritize and where we put out money is important as well. Money sunsets and comes and goes. We have enough assets right now to do our job, and I think we are able to do it well.

Yet we hear—and Mr. MacGregor spoke about this—discussions about how we recover from all of the money that was lost out of the CFIA. We constantly hear from you and the Liberals about how we recover from all of that, so this is what we are talking about. This is where the numbers are coming from. I'd be happy to speak with the officials as they would be able to give us more detail in the next hour.

The next point that I wanted to make has to do with the carbon tax. My specific question is this: how much reduction of greenhouse gas emissions will the carbon tax result in as far as our agriculture industry is concerned?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much, Earl.

CFIA will be available to you—

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Thank you.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** —afterwards for your detailed questions.

Earl, as you know, we canvassed in the last election and indicated quite clearly we were going to put a tax on carbon and grow our GDP at the same time. That's exactly what we're doing. Last year, we had the largest growth in the G7. What you have to make sure you don't do is create a myth that dealing with our environment, making sure we have a place to live, making sure that we're able to grow the agricultural product—

● (1630)

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Minister, at that point in time, the carbon tax wasn't implemented.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** You cannot do it if you do not take care of your environment, and that's exactly what we canvassed on, and that's exactly what we're doing and it is creating the growth.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** If there are no numbers, I understand that, because there would be no numbers on how much the carbon tax was going to cost.

I'll go back to another point, and this has to do with trade. I was with the trade committee. We were in southeast Asia—in Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia. There were discussions about things that were going on in India at the time we had our famous tour. Unfortunately, you weren't there. If you had been there, you could have perhaps spoken about this serious issue with our pulses and trying to keep up with the fumigation issue that was unfortunately allowed to lapse. These were the kinds of issues that people were looking at, and they were wondering where the government was on real issues when it came to trade and agriculture.

When we look at the concerns there, I'm wondering if we can anticipate some sort of emphasis on the India file, as well as the other critical file having to do with the durum wheat going into Italy. We have seen that there is a social media emphasis on our quality of wheat. These are issues that are extremely important. Where is your department making sure that we have the ability to move our product into other places in the world so that we can hit that $70-billion target that you have so loftily put out?

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much, Earl. It's $75 billion, and we will reach it. We will make sure we do it.

In Italy, we are very concerned about the mandatory country of origin labelling, which is most unfortunate. John was with me on one of those excursions, and as he's probably aware, I brought it up at every opportunity. However, we and the department are continuing to work with the Italian government and the EU in order to properly follow the trade regulations they've agreed to.

The Indian issue is most unfortunate. They just decided unilaterally that they were going to do this, not only with Canada but with every country in the world—the same treatment. It was unexpected, but again, we're working with the Indian government. We have great farmers in this country who can produce the product, and although it's obvious that India does not want the product at the moment, we were very concerned about the way they put the tariffs in place without any discussion. We will continue to work with the Indian government and every other government of the world. That's why we're in Vietnam, China, and other countries around the world, in order to make sure we can sell the product.

There are always going to be problems. There are always going to be people putting up trade barriers, I expect. We have to continue to work with the bureaucracy in order to get around these kinds of things, because it hurts our farmers, and I'm well aware of it. Continually, we have to make sure we are present around the world, and that the countries that are able to buy the product understand the quality of the product we have. That's what we have done, and that is what we will continue to do.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Unfortunately, that is all the time we have.

I certainly want to thank you for being here to talk to us about all the enhancements and all we're doing inside and outside our country for the farmers. Thank you so much for taking the time.

We shall have a small break, and then we'll come back with the officials for the second part.

**Hon. Lawrence MacAulay:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** We are suspended.

• _____ (Pause) _____ •

• (1635)

**The Chair:** Welcome.

[*Translation*]

In the second hour, we have officials from the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

Mr. Corriveau and Mr. Forbes, we will not quite have one hour, because we will have to go and vote at 5:20 p.m.

We'll start with you, Mr. Berthold. You have six minutes.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. This will start a little calmer.

Good morning, Mr. Forbes and Mr. Corriveau. Thank you so much for being with us.

I will continue with the topic I discussed with the minister.

I would like to get some details on what is really going on behind the scenes with regard to the NAFTA negotiations with the U.S. So that we have a clear understanding of the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food's role, to what extent is it involved in the current discussions with the U.S. on the renewal of NAFTA?

[*English*]

**Mr. Chris Forbes (Deputy Minister, Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Thank you.

Maybe I'll give just a brief answer on that. Obviously, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has a chief agricultural negotiator who participates at the officials' level at all the rounds of negotiation. There have been seven formal rounds of negotiation so far, plus some side discussions, and we've been intimately involved in all the negotiation rounds.

As the minister said, we have a mandate around modernizing NAFTA, and we participate in that way. We are there at the table as part of the negotiating team and, I think, as the only department with its own separate chief negotiator to deal with agricultural issues.

• (1640)

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** From your answer, I understand that, as officials, you are directly involved in the negotiations.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes, that's right.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Okay.

We know that Health Canada is responsible for Canada's Food Guide, which also affects several departments. It has a significant impact on the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, which has done a study on food policy and is providing direction to the Department of Health in this area.

For the benefit of Canadians, could you clarify the impact that Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada can have on the current process? Producers and processors are concerned. They report directly to your department and expect your department to defend this major industry, given the government's goal of increasing exports. They are therefore very concerned about the effects this may have on the market in which they operate.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I have a couple of points.

First, we have the means to converse directly with people in the sector. This is particularly the case with the round tables, of which we have 13 I think. One of them deals with issues in the grain sector and another addresses issues in the chicken industry. We use these round tables to discuss priorities and issues affecting our sector. Our role, through the round tables and in collaboration with our government colleagues, in this case, from the Department of Health, is really to make sure that everyone is familiar with the important facts and details. We create opportunities for interaction between our colleagues in the Department of Health and stakeholders in our sector.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** You have probably heard that the people in the industry, the producers, were complaining that they have not been sufficiently heard on the issue. It seems that their studies have not been taken into account properly.

Are you able to tell me why they feel this way?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I may not answer first-hand, but I hope the industry, if you asked them, would tell you the same thing they're telling me: that our efforts have improved communication between them and the Department of Health, in this case. We are confident that important information is shared by the Department of Health.

I don't have the list with me, but, in the fall, there were a number of information sessions where representatives from the Department of Health and industry interacted. I cannot assure you that everything is perfect, but I can tell you that we have improved communication between the sector and the Department of Health.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** I will ask my last question fairly quickly, since I only have one minute left.

In terms of front-of-pack labelling, the minister told us earlier that the decision would be made in cabinet.

If so, will Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada have a recommendation to make to cabinet?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** The Department of Health held a consultation. I think it was at the end of April and most of the people in our industry who participated in this consultation expressed their views on what the government was saying. I am not a member of cabinet, but we provide advice to the minister, who can pass it on to his cabinet colleagues.

● (1645)

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** So you will be preparing the minister on those issues for his meeting with cabinet. Is that correct?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes, that's the usual procedure. That is what happens with all issues before cabinet.

**Mr. Luc Berthold:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Berthold, and thank you too, Mr. Forbes.

[*English*]

Now we'll go to Mr. Longfield for six minutes.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Corriveau and Mr. Forbes, it's great to have you back in front of us again.

In looking at the main estimates, there's funding of $3,214,000 for a youth employment strategy under the career focus strategy. In Guelph we have specialist, high-skills majors programs at the high schools. We have the Ontario Agricultural College, which continues to have problems filling the number of jobs that are out there. They have had more jobs than student grads for many years now.

In looking at how we encourage youth to get into agriculture and how the investments that are being shown in the estimates are going to help us expand programs to get youth interested in agriculture, could you comment on how those tie together?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Sure. Why don't I start off on that.

There are a couple of things. The money under the career focus program is obviously for students to get work experience in the areas of interest to them. I think this is a great chance to bring people into the sector. It's a broader program that obviously works across the government.

I would say that it's one of a number of pieces that happen in different places. Some are co-op opportunities that may happen through universities. We have organizations like 4-H and others that are out there promoting the sector and interest in the sector. Indeed, just as a sidebar, I think there was a national science competition for students a couple of weeks ago, and a number of 4-H students finished close to the top of that, bringing agricultural science to the fore. There are a range of opportunities.

I would also say that within the department we do a lot of student hiring. Some summers ago it was over 1,000 students with all of the people who come into our research centres. There are multiple places where we can work on promoting the sector as an interesting place for people to work, where they can have fulfilling careers.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** We're lucky in Guelph that we have both the AAFC and OMAFRA, with the HQP program. We're more fortunate than a lot of communities.

We see this as an ongoing problem. We're trying to fill in with immigration and with other things, but unless we get the kids interested, we're going to be in trouble down the road.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** The minister mentioned that the government has set up six economic strategy tables, one of which is in agri-food. Certainly, I support that table.

I would say one of the issues that has come up is exactly that. How do we engage students to encourage them to participate in agriculture? How do we make sure the talented kids are coming through and seeing agriculture as an attractive career option?

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Super. Thank you.

There's an innovative solutions program that's been allocated $200,000 in this year's estimates. Innovative solutions can mean a lot of things. I'm wondering what the particular problems are that these funds are looking at. How are they different from what ISED might be working on?

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau (Assistant Deputy Minister, Corporate Management Branch, Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food):** Primarily this is in our science branch. In fact, under that umbrella there's a science cluster that touches a number of areas, from beef to canola. It's a partnership with the industry and sometimes the universities and our own research capacity internally. Basically it's to create that esprit de corps of providing a partnership among the private sector, the department, and academia.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** Is it associations that are providing the funding, or is it companies that provide that?

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau:** Some of it could come from the associations. Basically, it's to create that partnership that can exist between the three levels.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** When our committee travelled to Guelph a few weeks ago, we went to Cargill. We were on the floor there. They showed us the labour-intensive butchering that's going on and how much trouble they're having with it.

They're looking at some types of innovative solutions, but robots can't work very well with carcasses. Trying to tie in some type of science to solve the problems on the floor at Cargill, might that be some example of what we...?

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau:** It's a possibility. We have a research centre in Saint-Hyacinthe, for example, or in Guelph also, where they look at and work with the food industry.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** In the highlights section of the estimates, it mentions six priority areas, one being public trust. When we were looking at the policy framework when we did our study a few years ago, we kept coming back to the issue of public trust: how to build the trust between urban and rural, and how to build up the public trust for people who don't agree with what the agriculture industry is producing in terms of.... We had a bit of a heated discussion in our last session around front-of-package labelling, and that type of thing.

How are the estimates addressing the issue of public trust?

● (1650)

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** We do have the first year's programming under the Canadian agriculture partnership there. As you point out, public trust is a key issue for the sector, I would say, both through some of the federal programming—the agri-assurance program as an example—and also through some of the cost-shared programming that provinces and territories would be delivering.

Certainly we're looking for the projects that industry organizations have to raise the profile and help all Canadians understand the safety, quality, and other attributes of the food they eat.

**Mr. Lloyd Longfield:** I, personally, really appreciate what you're doing. The studies we're doing in this committee are actually ending up on budget line items. It's great for us to see that our work is getting somewhere. I appreciate your input today.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Longfield and Mr. Corriveau.

Mr. MacGregor, you have six minutes.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

On page 12 of the departmental plan, at the end of the top paragraph, it mentions the following:

> ...effective January 2018, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency created a new shared branch focused on international market access and regulatory trade issues to provide more coordinated support to industry in advancing our international trade agenda.

That was a question I had raised with the minister. I know there are some disagreements between the Liberals and the Conservatives about how the CFIA's budget has been used, or the amounts, over the years. I was wondering if you could tell me a little more about this shared initiative, because this was very much a topic that came up repeatedly during our cross-country trip.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Sure, I'm happy to do this.

What we did with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency was to agree that we would be better served—it sounds, I would say, in some sense potentially overly simplistic—by having a single assistant deputy minister who was overlooking most of our activities that were related to market access internationally. In the case of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as the minister said, it has a strong role as the competent authority for engaging with some of our international trading partners, to assure them of the nature of our system. On the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada side, of course, we work a lot with stakeholders, and with market promotion and market development. Again, it may sound overly simplistic, but we brought those two groups together under a single assistant deputy minister, which is allowing us to do a better job of making sure our priorities are effectively lined up, and that, hopefully, we're more efficient and effective as we engage internationally.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** On practical levels, what's this going to look like in terms of staffing overseas? Are there particular countries that you're targeting first? How are you envisioning rolling this out?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** In some sense it already is rolled out. A big chunk of it is actually our presence here in Ottawa. It is already rolled out.

What it might do abroad, and we generally tend to post people abroad for three- to four-year terms, is that as people are renewed, we'd look to make sure we have the right complement in the right places over time, that we're not duplicating each other's work between CFIA and AAFC. There's no change in resources. We're trying to be more efficient by working together, so that should, hopefully, allow us to do more with the same.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Okay. Thank you.

I want to move to the organics sector. At the tail end of our trip, we visited the University of British Columbia's experimental farm. They're really doing some incredible work. They were very much hammering home the message with us that they hope the work they are doing will move on to all agricultural sectors and that everyone will benefit, not just those in organics.

We've also heard from witnesses from the Canadian Organic Trade Alliance and from Organic Growers of Canada that their share of research dollars just does not really keep pace with the growing sector that they are. I'm just wondering, in looking ahead, does your department have plans to address this shortfall?

● (1655)

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I don't have a proportionate number in front of me, but I would say I'm not sure that.... I don't have the evidence one way or the other in front of me. We do dedicate.... The minister mentioned, certainly, the support we've provided on the standards side and the renewal of the standards.

On the research side, we do have dedicated research folks who are looking at organic production systems and doing research in that area. Do we have enough or not enough? It's always a bit of a balance on where the priorities of the sector are. We do have a new round, as the minister talked about, the Canadian agricultural partnership, obviously under the agriscience program, we will have new clusters of research that come out. Some of those should be of some benefit to the organics sector.

**Mr. Alistair MacGregor:** Thank you.

In the 2018-19 main estimates, I think there was some mention of some of the business risk initiatives getting an increase in funding. I just want to put this in the context of what our grain producers just went through with their transportation problems. Did you see a spike in demand? Is our current suite of programs adequate? Did we meet the demand for the crisis that just occurred?

I know that Bill C-49 has just passed, but I just want to ensure that we're actually there for our producers. We've heard a lot of very gut-wrenching testimony, that they were in a pretty bad spot.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** There are a couple of things. In the short term, where we would look to see if we were meeting the demand of producers would be in programs like the advance payment program and also through the Farm Credit Corporation. Were we seeing a big uptick in demand? I would say we managed. We didn't see major shifts in demand. I can't speak for FCC in great detail, but it is my understanding that they didn't see any great change from their side. I would say, certainly under our advance payment program, I don't think we saw major shifts, which would suggest that there's room in that program should producers need it, for sure.

The second part's all divvied up, on the BRM and the main estimates. This is really a projection we do to give folks a sense. It is demand-dependent, so obviously if situations were different, better or worse, then we would expect to see lower or higher BRM program dollar costs. That projection is there based on our forward look at the sector.

I know I'm probably running out of time on this, but I'd just say we're coming off, pretty much, a record year in terms of net income. We think this year coming up or this current year will be about the second-highest on record. That largely reflects a slight downtick in net income and the program responding to that.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Forbes. Thank you, Mr. MacGregor.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Poissant, the floor is yours.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant (La Prairie, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Corriveau and Mr. Forbes.

The latest budget includes $4.5 million in contributions to support the agriculture clean technology program.

What types of technologies or projects do you receive under this program?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I will answer your question in English, if you don't mind.

[*English*]

On the clean technology program I think the $4.5 million is the first phrase of the $25 million. We have $4.5 million in the main estimates and it will be a $25-million program over the five years of the program. We expect it certainly to look at precision agriculture in one area, and I forget the second. I'll remember the second in a second.

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau:** I can give you more detail right now. We haven't received any applications yet but we expect to be receiving them from the provinces sometime over the summer and those will be evaluated. We know the program has been launched and now we're seeking interest from the various provinces. We know some of them have already identified interest in submitting various projects.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** The second area will be new technology like clean technology, and then precision agriculture. It will be in partnership with the provinces and territories. They would have to match at least 50%, so we're leveraging provincial-territorial dollars on top of that. Sorry for the delay there.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** Thank you.

In processing companies and farms, the workforce is constantly being discussed. In addition, there is a labour shortage in all areas.

Are there discussions about this in the other departments, such as Citizenship and Immigration and Employment and Social Development Canada, for example?

● (1700)

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes, of course. We communicate with them on a regular basis. This is sort of consistent with the response to the healthy eating strategy. We make sure that our colleagues get good information about the current situation on farms and in factories, so that they understand our stakeholders' situation.

In addition, we ensure that our stakeholders are aware of priorities and ongoing revisions. We communicate regularly with each other to make sure that the system is working well.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** To make sure that there is an improvement, is that it?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** As you know, the next generation is very important, whether on farms or in processing companies.

What are your ties with agricultural educational institutions? Are you in touch with them? Do you seek feedback from students on how they see the future of agriculture?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes.

Last week, my fellow provincial deputy ministers and I met with university members to hear their priorities. We had an excellent discussion.

The assistant deputy minister responsible for science and technology meets regularly with university representatives to discuss our needs, our research priorities, their students, and how we can better dovetail with their reality. We also do a lot of research in partnership with our universities. As we said earlier, we hire about 1,000 or more students a year. I can say that our ties are strong from this point of view.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** Do I have any time left, Mr. Chair?

**The Chair:** You have almost two minutes left.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** You know that we are going to start a study on the mental health of producers. This problem is not new; it goes back a number of years. It even goes back more than 10 years.

Are we the first to address this issue or has it been talked about in the past?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Personally, I haven't seen any studies in Canada on the situation on farms. However, I know that the public service is very much involved in this issue.

Perhaps my colleague can tell you more about that.

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau:** No, not from my knowledge.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** According to the annals, the Senate tackled this issue in 1993. In agriculture, were you aware of that or has anyone asked you about it?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** On my end, I don't know. However, my colleague has worked in the department a few years longer than I have. We could check whether we have information on that and, if so, forward it to you.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** Earlier, we talked about public confidence. We know how important this can be.

Are there funding programs or are there provinces to which an organization can apply for funding to promote agriculture, production methods and environmental protections under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** There certainly are at the provincial level. This is part of the Canadian agricultural partnership. Programs probably exist in almost every province. At the federal level, there is the AgriInsure program.

**Mr. Jean-Claude Poissant:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Forbes.

Thank you, Mr. Poissant.

Mr. Breton, you have the floor for six minutes.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Forbes and Mr. Corriveau, thank you for joining us today and for the outstanding work that you do.

My first question is about the new AgriDiversity program. As part of the new 2018-19 departmental plan, the program's objective is to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector by building the entrepreneurial capacity of under-represented groups such as indigenous communities, youth, women and persons with disabilities, I believe.

Can you tell us what the status of that is?

Have you received any requests?

Have any projects been submitted to you?

What budget does the program have?

Earlier, we said that it was difficult to attract labour, particularly in the agriculture and agri-food sector. This program could be a positive way to improve the situation of some people who could participate in economic growth in the agricultural sector. It's a new program. It might be helpful if you could elaborate on that.

● (1705)

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** There are three points. As this is a new program, the current phase consists mainly of promoting it in the sector. It was launched in early April, but it is still brand new. I don't know how many applications have been received, but we can check that. Having said that, I think it's a little early to estimate the number of applications. The goal of the program is truly to increase opportunities, such as their entrepreneurial capacity, for those who would like to work in the sector. We are working with under-represented groups to ensure that we get good program suggestions from them.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Has any promotion been done?

I'm sorry, Mr. Corriveau. Please continue.

**Mr. Pierre Corriveau:** This is the first time the program has been included in the main estimates. Over the next five years, the program will receive contributions in the amount of $5 million, or $1 million per year. The program was launched and announced in late winter. However, I would not be able to tell you how many applications were submitted.

All federal programs launched before March 31 have been advertised. For the first time in our new policy framework, we wanted to make sure that there truly was a transition, that all our programs were continuing and that the new programs were announced in advance.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** To whom has the department promoted it?

Is it to the under-represented groups, producers, unions?

Do you know?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** We have been advertising to everybody, mostly, because, in launching the partnership on April 1, we had a lot of discussions with producer groups and so on. We also made commitments. In fact, until last year, we were busy preparing the partnership. We held extensive consultations with under-represented groups, including youth, women and indigenous people. We keep those who have participated in the commitments informed and make sure that they are aware of the program, the rules, and so on.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Pragmatically speaking, do agricultural producers have to submit the applications or projects? Or is it the under-represented groups?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** The under-represented groups have to do it.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Okay. So they are youth groups or women's groups, for example.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Organizations, not individuals, submit the applications. I cannot say that a group of producers would not be eligible. The goal is to increase capacity in the sector. Agricultural producers and under-represented groups could apply, but most often the under-represented groups do so.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Anyway, given the labour shortage, it is a great opportunity to promote the AgriDiversity program to those groups, which you may have done.

I asked some of our farmers if they were aware of this program, and they said no. Note that they don't always have the time to gather information; it's a shared responsibility. They saw an opportunity to get funding in this program. The fact remains that they do not always have experience. They need training and information. Whether they are men or women, it takes a long time to integrate them into their business.

How much time do I have left, Mr. Chair?

● (1710)

**The Chair:** You have 15 minutes left.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Fifteen minutes! Then I'll keep going. Ha, ha!

**The Chair:** I meant 15 seconds. You have 10 left now.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** Thank you for this opportunity.

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, it's my fault.

Would you like to add anything, Mr. Forbes?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** Yes. In terms of promoting the program, let me point out that the department has offices across the country. If you ever meet a group of producers unaware of our programs, the department has offices in each province where experts can explain the programs.

**Mr. Pierre Breton:** I will certainly direct people to those offices.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Forbes and Mr. Breton.

[*English*]

Now we'll move to Mr. Barlow for six minutes.

**Mr. John Barlow:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Again, thank you very much to the officials for being here and answering a big variety of questions and doing a great job of it.

I want to pick up on what I was asking the minister in terms of the impact the carbon tax will have on Canadian farms. I know an agricultural census was done in 2016, and I believe you did crunch some numbers on the average impact that it may have on Canadian farms. Those numbers showed it was going to be disproportionately more detrimental to western Canadian farms as opposed to eastern Canadian farms.

This data was combined from information from 2015-16. Is there going to be additional work on that, or would you be tabling updated data on that? That analysis was on $25 a tonne and that may increase.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** The brief answer is yes, we have done some updated work, which I think we can share. The first analysis you were referring to, Mr. Barlow, was done, I think, prior to the backstop being designed, and was based, as you said, on $25 a tonne, a fairly high level. We've refined some of that work since then. I don't have it in front of me.

Maybe the only caveat, from a straight analytical point, is that it is partial, because we don't have the provincial.... The minister talked about the provinces and their designing of the tax or the price, but also what they do with the generated funds and how they reinvest them into their provincial economies.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I'd appreciate it if you could table that information. That would be very helpful.

Was any work done on the updated analysis that you talked about, Mr. Forbes? Certainly from our stakeholders we've heard a lot of what farmers and ranchers and our agricultural producers have been doing for years in carbon sequestration as part of their daily lives. Has any of that been taken into account on the other side of that, the carbon sequestration the agricultural sector does?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** We can do a bit of that, in part, because some jurisdictions, as you would probably be aware, have carbon offset programs that provide some credit to the sector for actions taken. I think Alberta is the most notable there. Other jurisdictions are not quite as far along on that.

We have some of that. Again, I'm not sure it can be completely captured just because the nature of the modelling of some of these things is sometimes quite difficult.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I know this may be a difficult question for you to answer, but certainly another issue that many of our constituents have been asking is about the CPTPP. I know the treaty itself was tabled last week. Do you have any idea on when the legislation will be following? Certainly we're hopeful it would be tabled prior to the end of this session. Everyone here understands we want to be one of the first six countries to ratify that agreement to take full advantage of accessing those new markets.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** That's not my minister or department, so I couldn't comment on how quickly. Obviously we've heard the message you're passing. I think the desire of the sector has been quite clear, with the stakeholders I meet, about the importance of being one of the first signatories and being early out of the gate. Certainly that message has been clearly delivered to us, and we've certainly communicated it to colleagues.

● (1715)

**Mr. John Barlow:** When we were in government we had a very substantial compensation package as part of the CETA and the TPP. We haven't seen a similar compensation package unveiled as part of that agreement. Is that ongoing? Are negotiations with our supply-managed sector happening as well?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** We're certainly having discussions with the sector. The minister, and I believe the parliamentary secretary, have met with a range of supply-managed stakeholders since the agreement was signed in March. Certainly one of the things we're trying to better understand with the range of supply-managed groups is what they see as the effect and opportunities and challenges they face going forward. We're trying to get a more granular sense, if you will, of how they see their sector going forward, and thinking about what that means in terms of how government can be a positive contributor to that.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I don't want to put words in your mouth, Mr. Forbes, but with the treaty now tabled and legislation hopefully happening in the next couple of weeks, there isn't a compensation package in place now, or close to being done, with the supply-managed sector.

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I wouldn't put words in my mouth. There is not a public package right now. Discussions are ongoing with the sector. I couldn't comment on, obviously, when the government would take a decision one way or the other on that.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I appreciate that.

I'm going to go back to the carbon tax. There's one question I forgot to ask.

As part of that updated analysis, with the $25-a-tonne up to $50-a-tonne carbon tax, has any data been done on what the reduction of GHG emissions from the agriculture sector would result from that increase in the carbon tax?

**Mr. Chris Forbes:** I don't believe there's anything in the work we did, because it was a static model, if you will. I'd have to check.

**Mr. John Barlow:** I'm done.

Thank you very much for your time.

**The Chair:** We're out of time. Thank you, Mr. Barlow.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Corriveau and Mr. Forbes, thank you again for being here this afternoon to answer our questions.

[*English*]

You can stay, but this part of the meeting is done. I ask the rest of the members to stay, because we have to vote on the estimates.

[*Translation*]

Pursuant to Standing Order 81(4), the committee will now consider the votes in the main estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2019, less the interim supply granted by the House on March 22, 2018.

Do I have unanimous consent to vote on all the votes in one motion?

**Some hon. members:** Okay.

CANADIAN DAIRY COMMISSION

Vote 1—Program expenditures..... $3,755,068

(Vote 1 agreed to on division)

Canadian Grain Commission

Vote 1—Program expenditures..... $4,846,955

(Vote 1 agreed to on division)

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

Vote 1—Operating expenditures..... $568,453,709

Vote 5—Capital expenditures..... $54,888,471

Vote 10—Grants and contributions..... $425,525,000

(Votes 1, 5 and 10 agreed to on division)

**The Chair:** Shall I report these votes to the House?

**Some hon. members:** Agreed.

**The Chair:** That's all. Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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